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THE

MOALLAKA'T

OR

SEVEN ARABIAN POEMS,

WHICH WERE SUSPENDED ON

THE TEMPLE AT MECCA;

TRANSLATED BY

SIR WILLIAM JONES, KNIGHT

ONE OF THE JUDGES OF HER MAJESTY'S LATE
SUPREME COURT, FORT WILLIAM, BENGAL, FOUNDER
AND FIRST PRESIDENT OF THE
ASIATIC SOCIETY OF BENGAL.

(GOLDEN EDITION.)

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THE MOALLAKÁT.

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THE discourse will comprise observations on the antiquity of the *Arabian* language and letters; on the dialects and characters of *Himyar* and *Koraish*, with accounts of some *Himyarick* poets; on the manners of the *Arabs* in the age immediately preceding that of *Mahomed*; on the temple at *Mecca*, and the *Moâllaká*, or pieces of poetry *suspended* on its walls or gate; lastly, on the lives of the *Seven Poets*, with a critical history of their works, and the various copies or editions of them preserved in *Europe*, *Asia* and *Africa*.

The Notes will contain authorities and reasons for the translation of controverted passages; will elucidate all the obscure couplets, and exhibit or propose amendments of the text; will direct the reader's attention to particular beauties, or point out remarkable defects; and will throw light on the images, figures, and allusions of the *Arabian* poets,

by citations either from writers of their own country, or from such of our *European* travellers as best illustrate the ideas and customs of eastern nations.

But the *Discourse* and *Notes* are ornamental only, not essential, to the work; and, by sending it abroad in its present form, the translator may reap no small advantage, if the learned here or on the Continent will favour him in the course of the summer with their strictures and annotations, and will transmit them for that purpose to the publisher. It is hoped, that the war will raise no obstacle to this intercourse with the scholars of *Leyden*, *Paris*, and *Madrid*; for men of letters, as such, ought, in all places and at all times, to carry *flags of truce*.

A. D. 1783.

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THE POEM

OF

AMRIOLKAIS.

THE ARGUMENT.

THE poet, after the manner of his countrymen, supposes himself attended on a journey by a company of friends ; and, as they pass near a place, where his mistress had lately dwelled, but from which her tribe was then removed, *he desires them to stop a while*, that he might indulge the painful pleasure of weeping over the deserted remains of her tent. They comply with his request, but exhort him to show more strength of mind, and urge two topics of consolation ; namely, *that he had before been equally unhappy, and that he had enjoyed his full share of pleasures :* thus by the recollection of his passed delight his imagination is kindled, and his grief suspended.

He then gives his friends a lively account of his juvenile frolics, to one of which they had

alluded. It seems, he had been in love with a girl named *Onaiza*, and had in vain sought an occasion to declare his passion : one day, when her tribe had struck their tents, and were changing their station, the woman, as usual, came behind the rest, with the servants and baggage, in carriages fixed on the backs of camels. *Amriolkais* advanced slowly at a distance, and, when the men were out of sight, had the pleasure of seeing *Onaiza* retire with a party of damsels to a rivulet or pool, called *Daratjuljul*, where they undressed themselves, and were bathing, when the lover appeared, dismounted from his camel, and sat upon their clothes, proclaiming aloud, that *whoever would redeem her dress, must present herself naked before him.*

They adjured, entreated, expostulated ; but, when it grew late, they found themselves obliged to submit, and all of them recovered their clothes except *Onaiza*, who renewed her adjurations, and continued a long time in the water : at length she also performed the condition, and dressed herself. Some hours had passed, when the girls complained of cold and hunger ; *Amriolkais* therefore instantly *killed*

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the young camel on which he had ridden, and, having called the female attendants together, made a fire and roasted him. The afternoon was spent in gay conversation, not without a cheerful cup, for he was provided with wine in a leathern bottle ; but, when it was time to follow the tribe, the prince (for such was his rank) had neither camel nor horse ; and *Onaiza*, after much importunity, consented to take him *on her camel before the carriage*, while the other damsels divided among themselves the less agreeable burden of his arms, and the furniture of his beast.

He next relates his courtship of *Fathima*, and his more dangerous amour with a girl of a tribe at war with his own, *whose beauties he very minutely and luxuriantly delineates.* From these love-tales he proceeds to the commendation of his own fortitude, when he was passing a desert in the darkest night ; and the mention of the morning, which succeeded, leads him to *a long description of his hunter, and of a chase in the forest*, followed by a feast on the game, which had been pierced by his javelins.

Here his narrative seems to be interrupted by *a storm of lightning and violent rain:* he

nobly describes the shower and the torrent, which it produced down all the adjacent mountains; and, his companions retiring to avoid the storm, the drama (for the poem has the form of a dramatic pastoral) ends abruptly.

The metre is of the *first* species, called *long verse*, and consists of the *bacchius*, or *amphibrachys*, followed by the first *epitrite*; or in the *fourth* and *eighth* places of the distich, by the *double iambus*, the last syllable being considered as a long one: the regular form, taken from the second chapter of *Commentaries on Asiatic Poetry*, is this;

"Amator | puellarum | miser sæ | pe fallitur
Ocellis | nigris, labris | odoris, | nigris comis."

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THE POEM

OF

AMRIOLKAIS.

1 "STAY—Let us weep at the remembrance of our beloved, *at the sight of* the station *where her tent was raised*, by the edge of yon bending sands between DAHUL and HAUMEL,

2 TUDAM and MIKRA ; *a station*, the marks of which are not wholly effaced, though the south wind and the north have woven the twisted sand."

3 *Thus I spoke*, *when* my companions stopped their courses by my side, and said, "Perish not through despair: only be patient."

4 A profusion of tears, *answered I*, is my sole relief ; but what avails it to shed them over the remains of a deserted mansion ?

5 "Thy condition, *they replied*, is not more painful than when thou leftest HOWAIRA,

before thy present passion, and her neighbour REBABA, *on the hills of* MASEL."

6 *Yes, I rejoined*, when those two damsels departed, musk was diffused from their robes, as the eastern gale sheds the scent of clovegillyflowers :

7 Then gushed the tears from my eyes, through excess of regret, and flowed down my neck, till my sword-belt was drenched in the stream.

8 "Yet hast thou passed many days in sweet converse with the fair ; but none so sweet as the day, which thou spentest by *the pool of* DARAT JUL JUL."

9 On that day I killed my camel to give the virgins a feast ; and oh ! how strange was it, that they should carry his trappins and furniture !

10 The damsels continued till evening helping one another to the roasted flesh, and to the delicate fat like the fringe of white silk finely woven.

11 On that happy day I entered the carriage, the carriage of ONAIZA, who said, "Wo to thee ! thou wilt compel me to travel on foot."

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12 She added (while the vehicle was bent aside with our weight), "O AMRIOLKAIS, descend, or my beast also will be killed."

13 I answered: "Proceed, and loosen his rein; nor withhold from me the fruits of thy love, which again and again may be tasted with rapture.

14 Many a fair one like thee, though not *like thee* a virgin, have I visited by night; and many a lovely mother have I diverted from the care of her yearling infant adorned with amulets:

15 "When the suckling behind her cried, she turned round to him with half her body; but half of it, pressed beneath my embrace, was not turned from me."

16 Delightful too was the day, when FATHIMA at first rejected me on the summit of yon sand-hill, and took an oath, which she declared inviolable.

17 "O FATHIMA, said I, away with so much coyness; and, if thou hadst resolved to abandon me, yet at last relent.

18 If, indeed, my disposition and manners are unpleasing to thee, rend at once the mantle of my heart, that it may be detached from thy love.

19 Art thou so haughty, because my passion for thee destroys me ; and because whatever thou commandest, My heart performs ?

20 *Thou weepest*—yet thy tears flow merely to wound my heart with the shafts of thine eyes ; my heart, already broken to pieces and agonizing."

21 *Besides these*—with many a spotless virgin, whose tent had not yet been frequented, have I holden soft dalliance at perfect leisure.

22 *To visit one of them*, I passed the guards of her bower and a hostile tribe, who would have been eager to proclaim my death.

23 It was the hour, when the Pleiads appeared in the firmament, like the folds of a silken sash variously decked with gems.

24 I approached—she stood *expecting me* by the curtain ; and, *as if she was preparing* for sleep, had put off all her vesture, but her night-dress.

25 She said—"By him who created me (and gave me her lovely hand), I am unable to refuse thee ; for I perceive, that the blindness of thy passion is not to be removed."

26 Then I rose with her ; and, as we

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walked, she drew over our footsteps the train of her pictured robe.

27 Soon as we had passed the habitations of her tribe, and come to the bosom of a vale surrounded with hillocks of spiry sand,

28 I gently drew her towards me by her curled locks, and she softly inclined to my embrace : her waist was gracefully slender ; but sweetly swelled the part encircled with ornaments of gold.

29 Delicate was her shape ; fair her skin ; and her body well proportioned : her bosom was as smooth as a mirror,

30 Or like the pure egg of an ostrich of a yellowish tint blended with white, and nourished by a stream of wholesome water not yet disturbed.

31 She turned aside, and displayed her soft cheek : she gave a timid glance with languishing eyes, like those of a roe in *the groves of* WEGERA looking tenderly at her young.

32 Her neck was like that of a milk-white hind, but, when she raised it, exceeded not the justest symmetry ; nor was the neck of my beloved so unadorned.

33 Her long coal-black hair decorated

her back, thick and diffused like bunches of dates clustering on the palm-tree.

34 Her locks were elegantly turned above her head; and the riband, which bound them, was lost in her tresses, part braided part dishevelled.

35 She discovered a waist taper as a well-twisted cord; and a leg both as white and as smooth as the stem of a young palm, or a fresh reed, bending over the rivulet.

36 When she sleeps at noon, her bed is besprinkled with musk: she puts on her robe of undress, but leaves the apron *to her handmaids*.

37 She dispenses gifts with small delicate fingers, sweetly glowing at their tips, like the white and crimson worm of DABIA, or dentifrices made of ESEL-wood.

38 The brightness of her face illumines the veil of night, like the evening taper of a recluse hermit.

39 On a girl like her, a girl of a moderate height, between those who wear a frock and those who wear a gown, the most bashful man must look with an enamoured eye.

40 The blind passions of men for common

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objects of affection are soon dispersed ; but from the love of thee my heart cannot be released.

41 O how oft have I rejected the admonitions of a morose adviser, vehement in censuring my passion for thee ; nor have I been moved by his reproaches !

42 Often has the night drawn her skirts around me like the billows of the ocean, to make trial of my fortitude in a variety of cares ;

43 And I said to her (when she seemed to extend her sides, to drag on her unwieldy length, and to advance slowly with her breast),

44 Dispel thy gloom, O tedious night, that the morn may rise ; although my sorrows are such, that the morning-light will not give me more comfort than thy shades.

45 " O hideous night ! a night in which the stars are prevented from rising, as if they were bound to a solid cliff with strong cables !"

46 Often too have I risen at early dawn, while the birds were yet in their nests, and mounted a hunter with smooth short hair, of a full height, and so fleet as to make captive the beasts of the forest ;

47 Ready in turning, quick in pursuing, bold in advancing, firm in backing ; and performing the whole with the strength and swiftness of a vast rock, which a torrent has pushed from its lofty base ;

48 A bright bay steed, from whose polished back the trappings slide, as drops of rain glide hastily down the slippery marble.

49 Even in his weakest state he seems to boil while he runs ; and the sound, which he makes in his rage, is like that of a bubbling cauldron.

50 When other horses, that swim through the air, are languid and kick the dust, he rushes on like a flood, and strikes the hard earth with a firm hoof.

51 He makes the light youth slide from his seat, and violently shakes the skirts of a heavier and more stubborn rider ;

52 Rapid as the pierced wood in the hands of a playful child, which he whirls quickly round with a well-fastened cord.

53 He has the loins of an antelope, and the thighs of an ostrich ; he trots like a wolf, and gallops like a young fox.

54 Firm are his haunches ; and, when

his hinder parts are turned towards you, he fills the space between his legs with a long thick tail, which touches not the ground, and inclines not to either side.

55 His back, when he stands in his stall, resembles the smooth stone on which perfumes are mixed for a bride, or the seeds of coloquinteda are bruised.

56 The blood of the swift game, which remains on his neck, is like the crimson juice of *Hinna* on grey flowing locks.

57 He bears us speedily to a herd of wild cattle, in which the heifers are fair as the virgins in black trailing robes, who dance round *the idol* DEWAAR:

58 They turn their backs, and appear like the variegated shells of YEMEN on the neck of a youth distinguished in his tribe for a multitude of noble kinsmen.

59 He soon brings us up to the foremost of the beasts, and leaves the rest far behind; nor has the herd time to disperse itself.

60 He runs from wild bulls to wild heifers, and overpowers them in a single heat, without being bathed, or even moistened, with sweat.

61 Then the busy cook dresses the game, roasting part, baking part on hot stones, and quickly boiling the rest in a vessel of iron.

62 In the evening we depart; and, when the beholder's eye ascends to the head of my hunter, and then descends to his feet, it is unable at once to take in all his beauties.

63 His trappings and girths are still upon him: he stands erect before me, not yet loosed for pasture.

64 O friend, seest thou the lightning, whose flashes resemble the quick glance of two hands amid clouds raised above clouds?

65 The fire of it gleams like the lamps of a hermit, when the oil, poured on them, shakes the cord by which they are suspended.

66 I sit gazing at it, while my companions stand between DAARIDGE and ODHAIB; but far distant is the cloud on which my eyes are fixed.

67 Its right side seems to pour its rain on *the hills of* KATAN, and its left on *the mountains of* SITAAR and YADBUL.

68 It continues to discharge its waters over COTAIFA till the rushing torrent lays prostrate the groves of *Canahbel*-trees.

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69 It passes over *mount* KENAAN, which it deluges in its course, and forces the wild goats to descend from every cliff.

70 On *mount* KAIMA it leaves not one trunk of a palm-tree, nor a single edifice, which is not built with well-cemented stone.

71 *Mount* TEBEIR stands in the heights of the flood like a venerable chief wrapped in a striped mantle.

72 The summit of MOGAIMIR, covered with the rubbish which the torrent has rolled down, looks in the morning like the top of a spindle encircled with wool.

73 The cloud unloads its freight on the desert of GHABEIT, like a merchant of YEMEN alighting with his bales of rich apparel.

74 The small birds of the valley warble at day-break, as if they had taken their early draught of generous wine mixed with spice.

75 The beasts of the wood, drowned in the floods of night, float, like the roots of wild onions, at the distant edge of the lake.

THE

POEM OF TARAFA.

THE ARGUMENT.

THIS poem was occasioned by a little incident highly characteristic of pastoral manners. TARAFA and his brother MABED jointly possessed a herd of camels, and had agreed to watch them alternately, each on his particular day, lest, as they were grazing, they should be driven off by a tribe with whom their own clan was at war; but our poet was so immersed in meditation, and so wedded to his muse, that he often neglected his charge, and was sharply reproved by his brother, who asked him sarcastically, *whether, if he lost the camels, they could be restored by his poetry?* "You shall be convinced of it," answered TARAFA; and persisted so long in his negligence, that the whole herd was actually seized by the MODARITES. This was more than he really

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expected ; and he applied to all his friends for assistance in recovering the camels : among others, he solicited the help of his cousin MALEC, who, instead of granting it, took the opportunity ef rebuking him with acrimony for his remissness in that instance, and for his genaral prodigality, libertinism, and spirit of contention ; telling him, that *he was a disgrace to his family, and had raised innumerable enemies.*

The defence of a poet was likely to be best made in poetical language ; and TARAFA produced the following composition in vindication of his character and conduct, which he boldly justifies in every respect, and even claims praise for the very course of life, which had exposed him to censure.

He glories in his passion for women, and begins as usual with lamenting the departure of his beloved KHAULA, or *the tender fawn* ; whose beauty he describes in a very lively strain. It were to be wished, that he had said more of his mistress, and less of his camel, of which he interweaves a very long, and no very pleasing, description.

The rest of the poem contains an eloge on

his own fortitude, sprightliness, liberality, and valour, mixed with keen expostulations on the unkindness and ingratitude of MALEC, and with all the common topics in favour of voluptuousness : he even triumphs on having slain and dressed one of his father's camels, and blames the old man for his churlishness and avarice. It is a tradition preserved by *Abu Obeida*, that one of the chiefs, whom the poet compliments in the *eightieth* couplet, made him *a prsent of a hundred camels*, and enabled him, as he had promised, to convince his brother, *that poetry could repair his loss.*

The metre is the same with that used by AMRIOLKAIS.

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THE

POEM OF TARAFA.

1 "THE mansion of KHAULA is desolate, and the traces of it on the stony hills of TAHMED faintly shine, like the remains of blue figures painted on the back of a hand."

2 "*While I spoke thus to myself*, my companions stopped their coursers by my side, and said, "Perish not through despair, but act with fortitude."

3 Ah! *said I*, the vehicles, which bore away my fair one, on the morning when the tribe of MALEC departed, and their camels were traversing the banks of DEDA, resembled large ships

4 Sailing from ADULI; or vessels of *the merchant* IBN YAMIN, which the mariner now turns obliquely, and now steers in a direct course;

5 Ships, which cleave the foaming waves

with their prows, as a boy at his play divides with his hand the collected earth.

6 In that tribe was a lovely antelope with black eyes, dark ruddy lips, and a beautiful neck gracefully raised to crop the fresh berries of ERAC, a neck adorned with two strings of pearls and topazes.

7 She strays from her young, and feeds with the herd of rose in the tangled thicket, where she brouzes the edges of the wild fruit, and covers herself with a mantle of leaves:

8 She smiles, and displays her bright teeth rising from their dark-cloured basis, like a privet-plant in full bloom, which pierces a bank of pure sand moistened with dew:

9 To her teeth the sun has imparted his brilliant water; but not to the part where they grow, which is sprinkled with lead-ore, while the ivory remains unspotted.

10 Her face appears to be wrapped in a veil of sunbeams : unblemished is her complexion, and her skin is without a wrinkle.

11 Such cares *as this*, whenever they oppress my soul, I dispel *by taking adventurous journies* on a lean, yet brisk, camel, who runs with a quick pace both morning and evening ;

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12 Sure-footed, firm and thin as the planks of a bier ; whose course I hasten over longtrodden paths, variegated like a striped vest.

13 She rivals the swiftest camels even of the noblest breed, and her hind-feet rapidly follow her fore-feet on the beaten way.

14 In the vernal season, she grazes on yon two hills among others of her race, whose teats are not yet filled with milk, and depastures the lawns, whose finest grass the gentle showers have made luxuriantly green.

15 She turns back at the sound of her rider's voice and repels the caresses of a thick-haired russet stallion with the lash of her bushy tail,

16 Which appears as if the two wings of a large white eagle were transfixed by an awl to the bone, and hung waving round both her sides :

17 One while it lashes the place of him, who rides hindmost on her ; another while, it plays round her teats, which are become wrinkled and flaccid like a leathern bag, their milk no longer distending them.

18 Her two haunches are plump, and

compact as the two smooth valves of a lofty castle-gate.

19 Supple is her back-bone : her ribs are like the strongest bows ; and her neck is firmly raised on the well-connected vertebres.

20 The two cavities under her shoulders are spacious as two dens of beasts among the wild lotus-plants ; and stiff bows appear to be bent under her sinewy loins.

21 Her two thighs are exceedingly strong, and, when she moves, they diverge like two buckets carried from a well in the hands of a robust drawer of water.

22 *Her joints are well knit, and her bones are solid*, like a bridge of GRECIAN architecture, whose builder had vowed, that he would enclose it with well-cemented bricks.

23 The hair under her chin is of a reddish hue : her back is muscular : she takes long, yet quick, steps with her hind-feet, and moves her fore-feet, with agility ;

24 She tosses them *from her chest* with the strength and swiftness of cables firmly pulled *by a nervous arm* ; and her shoulders are bent like the rafters of a lofty dome :

25 She turns rapidly from the path :

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exceedingly swift is her pace; long is her head; and her shoulder-bones are strongly united to her sides.

26 The white and hollow marks of the cords, with which her burdens have been tied to her back, resemble pools of water on the smooth brow of a solid rock,

27 Marks, which sometimes unite and sometimes are distinct, like the gores of fine linen, which are sewed under the arms of a well-cut robe.

28 Long is her neck; and, when she raises it with celerity, it resembles the stern of a ship floating aloft on the billowy TIGRIS.

29 Her skull is firm as an anvil; and the bones, which the sutures unite, are indented, and sharp as a file.

30 Her cheek is smooth and white as paper of SYRIA; and her lips, as soft as dyed leather of YEMEN, exactly and smoothly cut.

31 Her two eyes, like two polished mirrors, have found a hiding-place in the caverns of their orbits, the bones of which are like rocks, in whose cavities the water is collected.

32 Thou beholdest them free from blemish or spot, and resembling in beauty those of

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wild-cow, the mother of playful young, when the voice of the hunter has filled her with fear.

33 Her ears truly distinguish every sound, to which she listens attentively in her nightly journies, whether it be a gentle whisper or a loud noise;

34 Sharp ears, by which the excellence of her breed is known! ears, like those of a solitary wild-bull in the groves of HAUMEL.

35 Her heart, easily susceptible of terror, palpitates with a quick motion, yet remains firm *in her chest* as a round solid stone striking a broad floor of marble.

36 If I please, she raises her head to the middle of her trappings, and swims with her fore-legs as swift as young a ostrich.

37 If I please, she moves more slowly; if not, she gallops, through fear of the strong lash formed of twisted thongs.

38 Her upper lip is divided, and the softer part of her nose is bored: when she bends them towards the ground, her pace is greatly accelerated.

39 On a camel like this I continue my course, when the companion of my adventure exclaims: "Oh! that I could redeem thee,

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and " redeem myself from the impending danger ! "

40 While his soul flutters through fear, and, imagining that he has lost the way, he supposes himself on the brink of perdition.

41 When the people say aloud, " Who is the man *to deliver us from calamity?* " I believe that they call upon me, and I disgrace not their commission by supineness or folly.

42 I shake the lash over my camel, and she quickens her pace, while the sultry vapour rolls in waves over the burning cliffs.

43 She floats proudly along with her flowing tail, as the dancing-girl floats in the banquet of her lord, and spreads the long white skirts of her trailing vest.

44 I inhabit not the lofty hills through fear of enemies or of guests ; but, when the tribe or the traveller demand my assistance, I give it eagerly.

45 If you seek me in the circle of the assembled nation, there you find me ; and, if you hunt me in the bowers of the vintner, there too you discover your game.

46 When you visit me in the morning, I offer you a flowing goblet ; and, if you

make excuses, I bid you drink it with pleasure, and repeat your draught.

47 When all the clan are met to state their pretensions to nobility, you will perceive me raised to the summit of an illustrious house, the refuge of the distressed.

48 My companions in the feast are youths bright as stars, and singing-girls, who advance towards us, clad in striped robes and saffron-coloured mantles :

49 Large is the opening of their vests above their delicate bosoms, through which the inflamed youth touches their uncovered breasts of exquisite softness.

50 When we say to one of them, "Let us hear *a song*," she steps before us with easy grace, and begins with gentle notes, in a voice not forced ;

51 When she warbles in a higher strain, you would believe her notes to be those of camels lamenting their lost young.

52 Thus I drink old wine without ceasing, and enjoy the delights of life ; selling and dissipating my property both newly acquired and inherited ;

53 Until the whole clan reject me, and

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leave me solitary like a diseased camel smeared with pitch :

54 Yet even now I perceive, that the sons of earth *(the most indigent men)* acknowledge my bounty, and the rich inhabitants of yon extended camp *confess my glory.*

55 O thou, who censurest me for engaging in combats and pursuing pleasures, wilt thou, *if I avoid them*, insure my immortality ?

56 If thou art unable to repel the stroke of death, allow me, before it comes, to enjoy the good, which I possess.

57 Were it not for three enjoyments, which youth affords, I swear by thy prosperity, that I should not be solicitous how soon my friends visited me on my death-bed :

58 First ; to rise before the censurers awake, and to drink tawny wine, which sparkles and froths when the clear stream is poured into it.

59 Next, when a warrior, encircled by foes, implores my aid, to bend towards him my prancing charger, fierce as a wolf among the GADHA-trees, whom the sound of human steps has awakened, and who runs to quench his thirst at the brook.

60 Thirdly, to shorten a cloudy day, a day astonishingly dark, by toying with a lovely delicate girl under a tent supported by pillars,

61 A girl, whose bracelets and garters seem hung on the stems of OSHAR-trees, or of *ricinus*, not stripped of their soft leaves.

62 Suffer me whilst I live, to drench my head *with wine*, lest, having drunk too little in my life-time, *I should be thirsty in another state.*

63 A man of my generous spirit drinks his full draught to-day ; and to-morrow, when we are dead, it will be known, which of us has not quenched his thirst.

64 I see no difference between the tomb of the anxious miser, gasping over his hoard, and the tomb of the libertine lost in the maze of voluptuousness.

65 You behold the sepulchres of them both raised in two heaps of earth, on which are elevated two broad piles of solid marble among the tombs closely connected.

66 Death, I observe, selects the noblest heroes for her victims, and reserves as her property the choicest possessions of the sordid hoarder.

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67 I consider time as a treasure decreasing every night; and that, which every day diminishes, soon perishes for-ever.

68 By thy life, my friend, when death inflicts not her wound, she resembles a camel-driver, who relaxes the cord which remains twisted in his hand.

69 What causes the variance, which I perceive, between me and my cousin MALEC, who, whenever I approach him, retires and flees to a distance?

70 He censures me, whilst I know not the ground of his censure; just as KARTH, the son of AABED, reproved me in the assembly of the tribe.

71 He bids me wholly despair of all the good which I seek, as if we had buried it in a gloomy grave;

72 And this for no defamatory words which I have uttered, but only because I sought, without remissness, for the camels of my brother MABED.

73 I have drawn closer the ties of our relation, and I swear by thy prosperity, that in all times of extreme distress, my succour is at hand.

74 Whenever I am summoned on momentous enterprises, I am prepared to encounter peril; and whenever the foe assails thee impetuously, I defend thee with equal vehemence.

75 If any base defamers injure thy good name by their calumnies, I force them, without previous menace, to drain a cup from the pool of death;

76 Yet, without having committed any offence, I am treated like the worst offender, am censured, insulted, upbraided, rejected.

77 Were any other man *but* MALEC my cousin, he would have dispelled my cares, or have left me at liberty for a season.

78 But my kinsman strangles me with cruelty, even at the very time when I am giving thanks for past, and requesting new, favours; even when I am seeking from him the redemption of my soul.

79 The unkindness of relations gives keener anguish to every noble breast than the stroke of an INDIAN cimeter.

80 Permit me then to follow the bent of my nature, and I will be grateful for thy indulgence, although my abode should be

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fixed at such a distance as the mountains of DARGHED.

81 Had it pleased the Author of my being, I might have been illustrious as KAIS, the son of KHALED ; had it pleased my Creator, I might have been eminent as AMRU, the son of MORTHED :

82 Then should I have abounded in wealth ; and the noblest chiefs would have visited me as a chieftain equally noble.

83 I am light, as you know me all, and am nimble ; following my own inclinations, and briskly moving as the head of a serpent with flaming eyes.

84 I have sworn, that my side should never cease to line a bright INDIAN blade with two well-polished and well-sharpened edges.

85 A penetrating cimeter ! When I advance with it in my defence against a fierce attack, the first stroke makes a second unnecessary : it is not a mere pruning-sickle,

86 But the genuine brother of confidence, not bent by the most impetuous blow ; and, when they say to me, " Gently," I restrain its rage, and exclaim, " It is enough."

87 When the whole clan are bracing on

their armour with eager haste, thou mayst find me victorious in the conflict, as soon as my hand can touch the hilt of this cimeter.

88 Many a herb of slumbering camels have I approached with my drawn sabre when the foremost of them *awakening* have fled through fear of me:

89 But one of them has passed before me, strong-limbed, full-breasted, and well-fed, the highly-valued property of a morose old churl, dry and thin as a fuller's club.

90 He said to me, when the camel's hoof and thigh were dismembered, "Seest thou not how great an injury thou hast done me?"

91 Then he turned to his attendants, saying, "What opinion do you form of that young wine-drinker, who assails us impetuously, whose violence is preconcerted?"

92 "Leave him, he added, and let this camel be his perquisite; but, unless you drive off the hindmost of the herd, he will reiterate his mischief."

93 Then our damsels were busy in dressing the camel's foal, and eagerly served up the luscious bunch.

94 O daughter of MABED, sing my

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praises, if I am slain, according to my desert, and rend thy vest with sincere affliction!

95 Compare me not with any man, whose courage equals not my courage; whose exploits are not like mine; who has not been engaged in combats in which I have been distinguished;

96 With a man slow in noble enterprises, but quick in base pursuits; dishonoured in the assembly of the tribe, and a vile outcast.

97 Had I been ignoble among my countrymen, the enmity of the befriended and the friendless might have been injurious to me;

98 But their malevolence is repelled by my firm defiance of them, by my boldness in attack, by my solid integrity, and my exalted birth.

99 By thy life, the hardest enterprises neither fill my day with solicitude, nor lengthen the duration of my night:

100 But many a day have I fixed my station immovably in the close conflict, and defended a pass, regardless of hostile menaces,

101 On my native field of combat, where even the boldest hero might be apprehensive of

destruction; where the muscles of our chargers quake, as soon as they mingle in battle;

102 And many an arrow *for drawing lots* have I seen well-hardened and made yellow by fire, and then have delivered it into the hand of a gamester noted for ill fortune.

103 *Too much wisdom is folly*; for time will produce events, of which thou canst have no idea; and he, to whom thou gavest no commission, will bring thee unexpected news.

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THE

POEM OF ZOHAIR.

THE ARGUMENT.

THE war of DAHIS, of which *Amriolkais* is by some supposed to have been the cause, had raged near forty years, if the *Arabian* account be true, between the tribes of ABS and DHOBYAN, who both began at length to be tired of so bloody and ruinous a contest; a treaty was therefore proposed and concluded; but HOSEIN, the son of DEMDEM whose brother HAREM had been slain by WARD, the son of HABES had taken a solemn oath, not unusual among the Arabs, *that he would not bathe his head in water*, until he had avenged the death of his brother, by killing either WARD himself, or one of his nearest ralations. His head was not long unbathed; and he is even supposed to have violated the law of hospitality by

slaying a guest, whom he found to be an ABSITE descended lineally from the common ancestor GALEB. This malignant and vindictive spirit gave great displeasure to HARETH and HAREM, two virtuous chiefs of the same tribe with HOSEIN; and, when the ABSITES were approaching in warlike array to resent the infraction of the treaty, HARETH sent his own son to the tent of their chief with *a present of a hundred fine camels*, as an atonement for the murder of their countryman, and a message importing his firm reliance on their honour, and his hope, *that they would prefer the milk of the camels to the blood of his son.* Upon this *Rabeiah*, the prince of ABS, having harangued his troops, and received their approbation, sent back the youth with this answer; that "he accepted the camels as an expiatory gift, and would supply the imperfection of the former treaty by a sincere and durable peace."

In commemoration of this noble act, ZOHAIR, then a very old man, composed the following panegyric on *Hareth* and *Harem*; but the opening of it, like all the others, is amatory and elegiac; it has also something of the dramatic form.

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The poet, supposed to be travelling with a friend, recognises the place where the tent of his mistress had been pitched twenty years before: he finds it wild and desolate; but his imagination is so warmed by associated ideas of former happiness, that he seems to discern a company of damsels, with his favourite in midst of them, of whose appearance and journey he gives a very lively picture; and thence passes, rather abruptly, to the praises of the two peace-makers and their tribe; inveighs against the malignity of HOSEIN; personifies *War*, the miseries of which he describes in a strain highly figurative; and concludes with a number of fine maxims not unlike the proverbs of *Solomon*, which he repeats to his friend as a specimen of his wisdom acquired by long experience.

The measure is the same with that of the first and second poems.

THE

POEM OF ZOHAIR.

1 ARE these the only traces of the lovely OMMAUFIA? Are these the silent ruins of her mansion in the rough plains of DERRAAGE and MOTHATALLEM?

2 ARE the remains of her abode, in the two stations of KARMA, become like blue stains renewed with fresh woad on the veins of the wrist?

3 There the wild cows with large eyes, and the milk-white deer, walk in slow succession while their young rise hastily to follow them from every lair.

4 On this plain I stopped, after an absence of twenty summers, and with difficulty could recollect the mansion of my fair one after long meditation;

5 *After surveying* the black stones on which her cauldrons used to be raised, and the

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canal round her tent, like the margin of a fish-pond, which time had not destroyed.

6 Soon as I recollected the dwelling-place of my beloved, I said to the remains of her bower : "Hail, sweet bower ; may thy morning be fair and auspicious !"

7 But, *I added*, look, my friend ! dost thou not discern a company of maidens seated on camels, and advancing over the high ground above *the streams of* JORTHAM ?

8 They leave on their right the mountains and rocky plains of KENAAN. Oh ! how many of my bitter foes, and how many of my firm allies, does KENAAN contain !

9 They are mounted in carriages covered with costly awnings, and with rose-coloured veils, the linings of which have the hue of crimson *Andem*-wood.

10 They now appear by the valley of SUBAAN, and now they pass through it : the trappings of all their camels are new and large.

11 When they ascend from the bosom of the vale, they sit forward on the saddle-cloths, with every mark of a voluptuous gaiety.

12 The locks of stained wool, that fall from their carriages, whenever they alight,

resemble the scarlet berries of night-shade not yet crushed.

13 They rose at day-break ; they proceeded at early dawn ; they are advancing towards the valley of RAS *directly and surely*, as the hand to the mouth.

14 Now, when they have reached the brink of yon blue gushing rivulet, they fix the poles of their tents, like the *Arab* with a settled mansion.

15 Among them the nice gazer on beauty may find delight, and the curious observant eye may be gratified with charming objects.

16 *In this place*, how nobly did the two descendants of GAIDH, the son of MORRA, labour to unite the tribes, which a fatal effusion of blood had long divided !

17 I have sworn by the sacred edifice, round which the sons of KORAISH and JORHAM, who built it, make devout processions ;

18 Yes, I have solemnly sworn, that I would give due praise to that illustrious pair, who have shown their excellence in all affairs, both simple and complicated.

19 *Noble chiefs !* You reconciled ABS and PHOBYAN after their bloody conflicts ; after

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the deadly perfumes of MINSHAM had long scattered poison among them.

20 You said, "We will secure the public good on a firm basis: whatever profusion of wealth or exertions of virtue it may demand, we *will* secure it."

21 Thence you raised a strong fabric of peace; from which all partial obstinacy and all criminal supineness were alike removed.

22 Chiefs, exalted in the high ranks of MAAD, *father of Arabs!* may you be led into the paths of felicity! The man, who opens for his country a treasure of glory, should himself be glorified.

23 They drove to the tents of their appeased foes a herd of young camels, marked for the goodness of their breed, and either inherited from their fathers or the scattered prizes of war.

24 With a hundred camels they closed all wounds: in due season were they given, yet the givers were themselves free from guilt.

25 The atonement was auspiciously offered by one tribe to the other; yet those, who offered it, had not shed a cupful of blood.

26 Oh! convey this message from me to

the sons of DHOBYAN, and say to the confederates : Have you not bound yourselves in this treaty by an indissoluble tie ?

27 Attempt not to conceal from GOD the designs which your bosoms contain ; for that, which you strive to hide, GOD perfectly knows.

28 He sometimes defers the punishment, but registers the crime in a volume, and reserves it for the day of account : sometimes he accelerates the chastisement, and heavily it falls !

29 War is a dire fiend, as you have known by experience ; nor is this a new or a doubtful assertion concerning her.

30 When you expelled her from your plains, you expelled her covered with infamy ; but, when you kindled her flame, she blazed and raged.

31 She ground you, as the mill grinds the corn with its lower stone : like a female camel she became pregnant ; she bore twice in one year ; and, at her last labour, she was the mother of twins :

32 She brought forth Distress and Ruin, monsters full-grown, each of them deformed as the dun camel of AAD : she then gave them her breast and they were instantly weaned.

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33 O what plenty she produced in your land! The provisions, which she supplied, were more abundant, no doubt, than those which the cities of IRAK dispense to their inhabitants, weighed with large weights, and measured in ample measures!

34 Hail, illustrious tribe! They fix their tents where faithful allies defend their interests, whenever some cloudy night assails them with sudden adversity.

35 Hail, noble race! among whom neither can the revengeful man wreak his vengeance; nor is the penitent offender left to the mercy of his foes.

36 Like camels, were they turned loose to pasture between the times of watering; and then were they led to copious pools, horrid with arms and blood;

37 They dragged one another to their several deaths; and then were they brought back, like a herd, to graze on pernicious and noxious weeds.

38 I swore by my life, that I would exalt with praises that excellent tribe, whom HOSEIN, the son of DEMDEM, injured, when he refused to concur in the treaty.

39 He bent his whole mind to the accomplishment of his hidden purpose: he revealed it not; he took no precipitate step.

40 He said, "I will accomplish my design; and will secure myself from my foe with a thousand horses well-caparisoned."

41 He made a fierce attack, nor feared the number of tents, where *Death*, the mother of vultures, had fixed her mansion;

42 There the warrior stood armed at all points, fierce as a lion with strong muscles, with a flowing name, the claws never blunted;

43 A bold lion, who, when he is assailed, speedily chastises the assailant; and, when no one attacks him openly, often becomes the aggressor.

44 Yet I swear by thy life, *my friend*, that their lances poured not forth the blood of IBN NEHEIC, nor of MOTHALLEM cruelly slain:

45 Their javelins had no share in drinking the blood of NAUFEL, nor that of WAHEB, nor that of IBN MOJADDEM.

46 The deaths of all those chiefs I myself have seen expiated with camels free from blemish, ascending the summits of rocks.

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47 He, indeed, who rejects the blunt end of the lance, *which is presented as a token of peace*, must yield to the sharpness of the point, with which every tall javelin is armed.

48 He, who keeps his promise, escapes blame; and he, who directs his heart to the calm resting-place of integrity, will never stammer nor quake *in the assemblies of his nation.*

49 He, who trembles all possible causes of death, falls in their way; even though he desire to mount the skies on a scaling-ladder.

50 He, who possesses wealth or talents, and withholds them from his countrymen, alienates their love, and exposes himself to their obloquy.

51 He, who continually debases his mind by suffering others to ride over it, and never raises it from so abject a state, will at last repent of his meanness.

52 He, who sojourns in foreign countries, mistakes his enemy for his friend; and him, who exalts not his own soul, the nation will not exalt.

53 He, who drives not invaders from his cistern with strong arms, will see it demolish-

ed ;- and he, who abstains ever so much from injuring others, will often himself be injured.

54 He, who conciliates not the hearts of men in a variety of transactions, will be bitten by their sharp teeth, and trampled on by their pasterns.

55 He, who shields his reputation by generous deeds, will augment it; and he, who guards not himself from censure, will be censured.

56 I am weary of the hard burdens which life imposes ; and every man who, *like me*, has lived fourscore years will assuredly be no less weary.

57 I have seen Death herself stumble like a dim-sighted camel ; but he, whom she strikes, falls ; and he, whom she misses, grows old even to decrepitude.

58 Whenever a man has a peculiar cast in his nature, although he supposes it concealed, it will soon be known.

59 Experience has taught me the events of this day and yesterday; but, as to the events of to-morrow, I confess my blindness.

60 Half of man is his tongue, and the

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other half is his heart: the rest is only an image composed of blood and flesh.

61 He, who confers benefits on persons unworthy of them, changes his praise to blame, and his joy to repentance.

62 How many men dost thou see, whose abundant merit is admired, when they are silent, but whose failings are discovered, as soon as they open their lips!

63 An old man never grows wise after his folly; but, when a youth has acted foolishly, he may attain wisdom.

64 We asked, and you gave: we repeated our requests, and your gift also was repeated; but whoever frequently solicits, will at length meet with a refusal.

THE

POEM OF LEBEID.

THE ARGUMENT.

ALTHOUGH the opening of this poem be that of a love-elegy, and the greater part of it be purely pastoral, yet it seems to have been composed on an occasion more exalted than the departure of a mistress, or the complaints of a lover; for the poet, *who was also a genuine patriot*, had been entertained at the court of NOMAAN, king of HIRA in *Mesopotamia*, and had been there engaged in a warm controversy with RABEIAH, son of *Zeiad*, chief of the *Absites*, concerning the comparative excellence of their tribes: LEBEID himself relates what might be very naturally expected from a man of his eloquence and warmth, *that he maintained the glory of his countrymen and his own dignity against all opponents*; but in order to perpetuate his victory, and to render his

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triumph more brilliant, he produced the following poem at the annual assembly, and, having obtained the suffrages of the critics, was permitted, we are told, to hang it up on the gate of the temple.

The fifteen first couplets are extremely picturesqe and highly characteristic of *Arabian* manners: they are followed by an expostulatory address of the poet himself, or of some friend, who attended him in his rambles, on the folly of his fruitless passion for *Nawara*, who had slighted him, and whose tent was removed to a considerable distance. Occasion is hence taken to interweave a long description of the camel, on which he intended to travel far from the object of his love, and which he compares for swiftness to a cloud driven by the wind, or a wild-ass running to a pool, after having subsisted many months on herbage only; or rather to a wild-cow hastening in search of her calf, whom the wolves had left mangled in the forest: the last comparison consists of *seventeen* couplets, and may be compared with the long-tailed similies of the *Greek* and *Roman* poets. He then returns to *Nawara*, and requites her coyness with expressions of equal indifference;

he describes the gaiety of his life, and the pleasures which he can enjoy even in his absence; he celebrates his own intrepidity in danger, and firmness on his military station; whence he takes occasion to introduce a short, but lively, description of his horse; and, in the *seventieth* couplet alludes to the before-mentioned contest, which gave rise to the poem: thence he passes to the praises of his own hospitality; and concludes with a panegyric on the virtues of his tribe.

The measure is of the fifth class, called *perfect* verse, which regularly consists of the compound foot *benedicerent*, six times repeated, in this form:

"Tria grata sunt | animo meo,ut | melius nihil,
Oculi nigri, | cyathus nitens, | roseus calyx."

But when the couplet admits the third epitrite, *pastoribus*, and the double iambus, *amantium*, it may be considered as belonging to the seventh, or *tremulous*, class; between which and the *perfect* the only distinction seems to be, that the *tremulous* never admits the *anapestic* foot. They are both, in the language of *European* prosody, *iambics* in which the even places are invariably pure, and

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odd places always exclude the dactyl : when the uneven feet are *trochees* or *pyrrhic*, the verses become *choriambic* or *peonic* ; but of this change we have no instance in the poem before us.

THE

POEM OF LEBEID.

1 DESOLATE are the mansions *of the fair*, the stations in MINIA, where they rested, and those where they fixed their abodes! Wild are the hills of GOUL, and deserted is the summit of RIJAAM.

2 The canals of RAYAAN are destroyed: the remains of them are laid bare and smoothed *by the floods*, like characters engraved on the solid rocks.

3 Dear ruins! Many a year has been closed, many a month, holy and unhallowed, has elapsed, since I exchanged tender vows with their fair inhabitants.

4 The rainy constellations of spring have made their hills green and luxuriant: the drops from the thunder-clouds have drenched them with profuse, as well as with gentle, showers;

5 *Showers*, from every nightly cloud,

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from every cloud veiling the horizon at day-break, and from every evening-cloud, responsive with hoarse murmurs.

6 Here the wild eringo-plants raise their tops: here the antelopes bring forth their young, by the sides of the valley; and here the ostriches drop their eggs.

7 The large-eyed wild-cows lie suckling their young, a few days old; their young, who will soon become a herd on the plain.

8 The torrents have cleared the rubbish, and disclosed the traces of habitations, as the reeds of a writer restore effaced letters in a book;

9 Or as the black dust, sprinkled over the varied marks on a fair hand, brings to view with a brighter tint the blue stains of wood.

10 I stood asking news of the ruins concerning their lovely habitants; but what avail my questions to dreary rocks, who answer them only by their echo?

11 In the plains, which now are naked, a populous tribe once dwelled; but they *decamped* at early dawn, and nothing of them remains but the canals, which encircled their

tents, and the THUMAAM-plants, *with which they were repaired.*

12 How were thy tender affections raised, when the damsels of the tribe departed; when they hid themselves in carriages of cotton, like antelopes in their lair, and the tents, as they were struck, gave a piercing sound!

13 They were concealed in vehicles, whose sides were well-covered with awnings and carpets, with fine-spun curtains and pictured veils:

14 A company of maidens were seated in them *with black eyes and graceful motion*, like the wild heifers of TUDAH, or the roes of WEGERA tenderly gazing on their young.

15 They hastened their camels, till the sultry vapour gradually stole them from thy sight; and they seemed to pass through a vale, wild with tamarisks and rough with large stones like the valley of BEISHA.

16 Ah! what remains in thy remembrance of the beautiful NAWARA, since now she dwells at a distance, and all the bonds of union between her and thee, both strong and weak, are torn asunder?

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17 A damsel, who sometimes has her abode in FAID, and sometimes is a neighbour to the people of HEJAAZ! how can she be an object of thy desire?

18 She alights at the eastern side of the two mountains, *Aja*, and *Salma*, and then stops on the hills of MOHAJJER; ROKHAAM also and FERDA receive her with joy.

19 When she travels towards YEMEN, we may suppose that she rests at SAWAYIK; and baits at the stations of WAHAAF and TEL-KHAAM.

20 Break then so vain a connexion with a mistress, whose regard has ceased; for hapless is an union with a maid, who has broken her vow!

21 When a damsel is kind and complacent, love her with ardent affection; but, when her faith staggers and her constancy is shaken, let your disunion from her be unalterably fixed.

22 *Execute thy purpose, O Lebeid*, on a camel, wearied by long journies, which have left but little of her former strength; a camel, whose sides are emaciated, and on whose back the bunch is diminished:

23 Yet even in this condition, when her

flesh is extenuated, and her hair thin, when, after many a toilsome day, the thong of her shoes is broken,

24 Even now she has a spirit so brisk, that she flies with the rein, like a dun cloud driven by the south wind, after it has discharged its shower;

25 Or like a female wild-ass, whose teats are distended with milk, while the male, by whom she is with foal, is grown lean with driving his rivals from her, with biting and kicking them in his rage.

26 He runs with her up the crooked hills, although he has been wounded in his battles; but her present coyness, compared with her late fondness, fills him with surprise.

27 He ascends the sandy hilloc of THALBUT, and explores its deserted top, fearing lest an enemy should lurk behind the guidestones.

28 There they remain till the close of the sixth month, till the frosty season is past; they subsist on herbage without water; their time of fasting and of retirement is long.

29 The thorns of the BUHMA-plant wound their hind-legs, and the sultry winds of summer drive them violently in their course.

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30 At length they form in their minds a fixed resolution *of seeking some cool rivulet,* and the object of their settled purpose is nearly attained.

31 They alternately raise high clouds of dust with an extended shade, as the smoke rises from a pile of dry wood newly kindled and flaming;

32 When fresh ARFADGE-plants are mingled in the heap, and the north-wind plays with the blazing fire.

33 He passes on, but makes her run before him; for such is his usual course, when he fears that she will linger behind.

34 They rush over the margin of the rivulet, they divide the waters of the full stream, whose banks are covered with the plants of KOLAAM,

35 Banks, which a grove of reeds, part erect and part laid prostrate, overshades or clothes as with a mantle.

36 Is this *the swiftness of* my camel? *No;* rather she resembles a wild-cow, whose calf has been devoured by ravenous beasts, when she had suffered him to graze apart, and relied for his protection on the leader of the herd;

37 A mother with flat nostrils; who, as soon as she misses her young one, ceases not to run hastily round the vales between the sand-hills, and to fill them with her mournful cries;

38 With cries for her white-haired young, who now lies rolled in dust, after the dun wolves, hunters of the desert, have divided his mangled limbs, and their feast has not been interrupted.

39 They met him in the moment of her neglect; they seized him with eagerness; for oh, how unerring are the arrows of death!

40 She passes the night in agony; while the rain falls in a continued shower, and drenches the tangled groves with a profuse stream.

41 She shelters herself under the root of a tree, whose boughs are thick, apart from other trees, by the edge of a hill, whose fine sands are shaken by her motion:

42 Yet the successive drops fall on her striped back, while the clouds of night veil the light of the stars.

43 Her white hair glimmers, when the darkness is just coming on, and sparkles like the pearls of a merchant, when he scatters them from their string.

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44 At length, when the clouds are dispersed, and the dawn appears she rises early, and her hoops glide on the slippery ground.

45 She grows impatient, and wild with grief: she lies frantic in the pool of SOAYID for seven whole days with their twin-sisters, *seven nights;*

46 And now she is in total despair; her teats, which were full of milk, are grown flaccid and dry, though they are not worn by suckling and weaning her young.

47 She now hears the cry of the hunters; she hears it, but sees them not; she trembles with fear; for she knows that the hunters bring her destruction.

48 She sits quivering, and imagines, that the cause of her dread will appear on one side and the other, before and behind her.

49 When the archers despair *of reaching her with their shafts*, they let slip their long-eared hounds, answering to their names, with bodies dry and thin.

50 They rush on; but she brandishes against them her extended horns, both long and sharp as javelins made by the skilful hand of SAMHAR.

51 Striving to repel them; for she knows that, if her effort be vain, the destined moment of her death must soon approach:

52 Then she drives *the dog* CASAAB to his fate; she is stained with his blood; and SOKHAAM is left prostrate on the field.

53 On a camel like this, when the flashes of the noon-tide vapour dance over the plain, and the sultry mist clothes the parched hills,

54 I accomplish my bold design, from which I am not deterred by any fear of reprehension from the most censorious man.

55 Knowest thou not, O NAWARA, that I preserve the knot of affection entire or cut it in two, as the objects of it are constant or faithless?

56 That I would leave without reluctance a country not congenial to my disposition, although death were instantly to overtake my soul?

57 Ah! thou knowest not how many serene nights, with sweet sport and mirthful revelry,

58 I pass in gay conversation; and often return to the flag of the wine-merchant, when he spreads it in the air, and sells his wine at a high price:

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59 I purchase the old liquor at a dear rate in dark leathern-bottles long reposited, or in casks, black with pitch, whose seals I break, and then fill the cheerful goblet.

60 How often do I quaff pure wine in the morning, and draw towards me the fair lutanist, whose delicate fingers skilfully touch the strings!

61 I rise before the cock to take my morning draught, which I sip again and again, when the sleepers of the dawn awake.

62 On many a cold morning, when the freezing winds howl, and the hand of the north hold their reins, I turn aside their blast *from the travellers, whom I receive in my tent.*

63 When I rise early to defend my tribe, my arms are borne by a swift horse, whose girths resemble my sash adorned with gems.

64 I ascend a dusty hill to explore the situation of the foe, and our dust flying in clouds reaches the hostile standard.

65 At length, when the sun begins to sink into darkness, and the veil of night conceals the ambuscade and the stratagems of our enemy,

66 I descend into the vale; and my steed raises his neck like the smooth branch of a lofty palm, which he, who wishes to cut it, cannot reach:

67 I incite him to run like a fleet ostrich, in his impetuous course, until, when he boils in his rage, and his bones are light,

68 His trappings are strongly agitated; a shower flows down his neck; and his surcingle is bathed in the scalding foam.

69 He lifts his head: he flies at liberty with the loose rein; and hastens to his goal, as a dove hastens to the brook, when her feverish thirst rages.

70 There is a mansion (*the palace of* NOMAAN) filled with guests, unknown to each other, hoping for presents and fearing reproof:

71 It is inhabited by men, like strong-necked lions who menace one another with malignant hate, like the demons ef BADIYÄ, with feet firmly rivetted in the conflict.

72 I disputed their false pretensions; yet admitted their real merit, according to my judgement; nor could the noblest among them surpass me in renown.

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73 Oft have I invited *a numerous company* to the death of a camel, bought for slaughter, to be divided by lot with arrows of equal dimensions:

74 I invite them to draw lots for a camel without a foal, and for a camel with her young one, whose flesh I distribute to all the neighbours.

75 The guest and the stranger, admitted to my board, seem to have alighted in the sweet vale of TEBAALA luxuriant with vernal blossoms.

76 To the cords of my tent approaches every needy matron, worn with fatigue, like a camel doomed to die at her master's tomb, whose vesture is both scanty and ragged.

77 There they crown with meat, while the wintry winds contend with fierce blasts, a dish flowing like a rivulet, into which the famished orphans eagerly plunge.

78 When the nations are assembled, some hero of our tribe, firm in debate, never fails by superior powers to surmount the greatest difficulty.

79 He distributes equal shares: he dispenses justice to the tribes: he is indignant,

when their right is diminished; and, to establish their right, often relinquishes his own.

80 He acts with greatness of mind and with nobleness of heart: he sheds the dew of his liberality on those, who need his assistance: he scatters around his own gains, and precious spoils, the prizes of his valour.

81 He belongs to a tribe whose ancestors have left them a perfect model; and every tribe, that descends from us, will have patterns of excellence, and objects of imitation.

82 If their succour be asked, they instantly brace on their helmets, while their lances and breast-plates glitter like stars.

83 Their actions are not sullied by the rust of time, or tarnished by disgrace; for their virtues are unshaken by any base desires.

84 He hath raised for us a fabric *of glory* with a lofty summit, to which all the aged and all the young men of our tribe aspire.

85 Be content, therefore, with the dispensations of the Supreme Ruler; for He, who best knows our nature, has dispensed justice among us.

86 When peace has been established by

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our tribe, we keep it inviolate; and He, who makes it, renders our prosperity complete.

87 Noble are the exertions of our heroes, when the tribe struggle with hardships; they are our leaders in war, and in peace the deciders of our claims:

88 They are an enlivening spring to their indigent neighbours, and to the disconsolate widows, whose year passes heavily away.

89 They are an illustrious race; although their enviers may be slow in commending them, and the malevolent censurer may incline to their foe.

THE

POEM OF ANTARA.

THE ARGUMENT.

This poem appears to have been a little older than that of ZOHAIR ; for it must have been composed *during* the war of DAHIS, which the magnanimity of the two chiefs, extolled by ZOHAIR, *so nobly terminated.* ANTARA, the gallant *absite* of whom so much has already been said in the preliminary discourse, distinguished himself very early in the war by his valour in attacking the tribe of DHOBYAN, and boasts in this composition, that he had slain DEMDEM, the father of HOSEIN and of HAREM, whom WARD, the son of HABES, afterwards put to death. An old enmity subsisted, it seems, between our poet and those two young men, who, as ANTARA believed, had calumniated him without provocation; and his chief object in this poem was to blazon

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his own achievements and exploits, and to denounce implacable resentment against the calumniators, whom his menaces were likely to intimidate: yet so harsh an argument is tempered by a strain in some parts elegiac and amatory; for even this vengeful impetuous warrior found himself obliged to comply with the custom of the ARABIAN poets, *who had left*, as he complains *little new imagery for their succeffors.*

He begins with a pathetic address to the bower of his beloved ABLA, and to the ruins of her deserted mansion: he bewails her sudden departure, the distance of her new abode, and the unhappy variance between their respective clans: he describes his passion and the beauties of his mistress with great energy: thence he passes to his own laborious course of life, contrasted with the voluptuous indolence of the fair, and gives a forcible description of his camel, whom he compares to a male ostrich hastening to visit the eggs, which the female, whose usual neglect of them is mentioned by naturalists, had left in a remote valley. He next expatiates on his various accomplishments and virtues; his mildness to

those who treat him kindly, his fierceness to those who injure him; his disregard of wealth, his gaiety, liberality; and above all, his military prowess and spirit of enterprise on which he triumphantly enlarges through the rest of the poem, except four couplets, in which he alludes obscurely to a certain love-adventure; and, after many animated descriptions of battles and single combats, he concludes with a wish, that he may live to slay the two sons of DEMDEM, and with a bitter exultation on the death of their father, whom *he had left a prey to the wild beasts and the vultures.*

The metre is *iambic*, like that of the poem immediately preceding.

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THE

POEM OF ANTARA.

1 Have the bards, who preceded me, left any theme unsung? *What, therefore, shall be my subject? Love only must supply my lay.* Dost thou then recollect, after long consideration, the mansion of thy beloved?

2 O bower of ABLA, in the valley of JIWAA, give me tidings of my love! O bower of ABLA, may the morning rise on thee with prosperity and health!

3 There I sttopped my camel, large as a tower, the anguish of my passion having delayed the accomplishment of my bold enterprise,

4 Whilst ABLA was dwelling in JIWAA, and our tribe *were stationed* in HAZN, and SAMAAN, and MOTATHALLEM.

5 Hail, dear ruins, with whose possessors I had old engagements.; more dreary and more desolate *are you become*, after the departure *of my beloved* OMM ALHEITHAM.

6 She dwells in the land of my foes, like roaring lions: oh! how painful has been my search after thee, fair daughter of MAKHREM.

7 I felt myself attached to her at our first interview, although I had slain her countrymen in battle: I assure thee, by the life of thy father, that of my attachment there can be no doubt.

8 *Thou hast possessed thyself of my heart;* thou hast fixed thy abode in it (imagine not that I delude thee) and art settled there as a beloved and cherished inhabitant.

9 *Yet* how can I visit *my fair one*, whilst her family have their vernal mansion in ONEIZATAIN, and mine are stationed in GHAILEM?

10 Surely thou hast firmly resolved to depart from me, since the camels of thy tribe, are bridled even in so dark a night.

11 Nothing so much alarms me *with a signal of her destined removal*, as my seeing the camels of burden, which belong to her tribe, grazing on KHIMKHIM-berries in the midst of their tents:

12 Among them *are* forty-two milch camels, dark as the plumes of a coal-black raven.

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13 Then, ANTARA, she pierced thee to the heart with her well-pointed teeth exquisitely white, the kiss of which is delicious, and the taste ravishingly sweet :

14 From the mouth of this lovely damsel, when you kiss her lips, proceeds the fragrance of musk, as from the vase of a perfumer ;

15 Or like the scent of a blooming bower, whose plants the gentle rains have kept in continual verdure, which no filth has sullied, and to which there has been no resort :

16 Every morning-cloud, clear of hail, has drenched it with a plentiful shower, and has left all the little cavities in the earth both round and bright as coins of silver :

17 Profusely and copiously it descends ; and every evening the stream, which nothing intercepts, gushes rapidly through it.

18 The flies remain in it with incessant buzzing, and their murmurs are like the song of a man exhilarated with wine :

19 Their sound, when they strike their slender legs against each other, is like the sound of a flint, from which the sparks are forced by a man with one arm, intent upon his labour.

20 While thou, *fair* ABLA, reclinest both evening and morning on the lap of a soft couch, I pass whole nights on the back of a dark-coloured horse well caparisoned.

21 My only cushion is the saddle of a charger with firm thick feet, strong sided, and large in the place of his girths.

22 Shall a camel of SHADEN bear me to thy tent, *a camel* far removed from her country, destitute of milk, and separated from the herd?

23 She waves her tail in her playful mood, and proudly moves her body from side to side even at the end of her nightly excursion: she strikes the hills with her quickly-moving and firmly-trampling hoofs.

24 Thus the bird without ears, between whose feet there is but a small space, *the swift ostrich* beats the ground in his evening course:

25 The young ostriches gather themselves around him, as a multitude of black YEMENIAN camels assemble round their Abyssinian *herdman*, who is unable to express himself *in the language of Arabia*.

26 They follow him guided by the loftiness of his head, which resembles the carriage

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of travelling damsels, raised on high, and covered like a tent :

27 His head, *though lofty*, is small ; when he is going to visit the eggs, *which his female left* in DHULASHEIRA, he looks like an *Ethiop* with short ears in a trailing garment of furred hides.

28 *My camel* drinks the water of DHERADHAIN, but starts aside with disdain from the *hostile* rivulets of DAILEM.

29 She turns her right side, as if she were in fear of some large headed screamer of the night.

30 Of a hideous wild cat fixed to her body, who, as often as she bent herself towards him in her wrath, assailed her with his claws and his teeth.

31 I continue all day on the well-cemented tower of her back, strongly raised, and firm as the pillars of him who pitches a tent ;

32 *When she rests*, she crouches on the soft bank of RIDA, and groans through fatigue like the soft sounding reed, which she presses with her weight.

33 *Her sweat* resembles thick rob or tena-

cious pitch, which the kindled fire causes to bubble in the sides of a cauldron :

34 It gushes from behind her ears, when she boils with rage, exults in her strength, and struts in her pride, like the stallion of her herd, when his rivals assail him.

35 O ABLA although thou droppest thy veil before me, yet know, that by my agility I have made captive many a knight clad in complete armour.

36 Bestow on me the commendation, which thou knowest to be due ; since my nature is gentle and mild, when my rights are not invaded ;

37 But, when I am injured, my resentment is firm, and bitter as coloquinteda to the taste of the aggressor.

38 I quaff, when the moontide heat is abated, old wine purchased with bright and well-stamped coin ;

39 I quaff it in a goblet of yellow glass variegated with white streaks, whose companion is a glittering flaggon well secured by its lid from the blasts of the north :

40 When I drink it my wealth is dissi-

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pated ; but my fame remains abundant and unimpaired ;

41 And, when I return to sobriety, the dew of my liberality continues as fresh as before : give due honour, therefore, to those qualities, which thou knowest me to possess.

42 Many a consort of a fair one, whose beauty required no ornaments, have I left prostrate on the ground ; and the life-blood has run sounding from his veins, opened by my javelin like the mouth of a camel with a divided lip :

43 With a nimble and doudle-handed stroke I prevented his attack ; and the stream, that gushed from the penetrating wound, bore the colour of anemonies.

44 Go, ask the warriors, O daughter of MALEC, if thou art ignorant of my valour, *ask them* that, which thou knowest not ;

45 *Ask how* I act, when I am constantly fixed to the saddle of an elegant horse, swimming in his course, whom my bold antagonists alternately wound ;

46 Yet sometimes he advances alone to the conflict, and sometimes he stands collected

in a multitudinous throng of heroes with strong bows.

47 *Ask*, and whoever has been witness to the combat, will inform thee, that I am impetuous in battle, but regardless of the spoils.

48 Many a warrior, clad in a suit of mail at whose violent assault the boldest men have trembled, who neither had saved himself by swift flight nor by abject submission,

49 Has this arm laid prone with a rapid blow from a well-straitened javelin, firm between the knots :

50 Broad were the lips of the wound ; and the noise of the rushing blood called forth the wolves, prowling in the night, and pinched with hunger :

51 With my swift lance did I pierce his coat of mail ; and no warrior, however brave, is secure from its point.

52 I left him, like a sacrificed victim, to the lions of the forest, who feasted on him between the crown of his head and his wrists.

53 Often have I burst the interior folds of a well-wrought habergeon worn by a famed warrior appointed to maintain his post ;

54 Whose hands were brisk in casting

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lots, when winter demands such recreation; a man, censured for his disregard of wealth, and for causing the wine-merchant to strike his flag *by purchasing all his store.*

55 When he saw me descend from my steed, and rush towards him he grinned with horor, but with no smile of joy.

56 My engagement with him lasted the whole day, until his head and fingers, covered with clotted gore, appeared to be stained with the juice of IDHLIM.

57 Then I fixed him with my lance: I struck him to the heart with an INDIAN cimeter, the blade of which was of a bright water, and rapid was the stroke it gave:

58 A warrior, whose armour seemed to be braced on a lofty tree; a chief, who, like a king, wore sandals of leather-stained with EGYPTIAN thorn; a hero withont an equal.

59 O lovely heifer! how sweet a prey was she to a hunter permitted to chase her! To me she was wholly denied; O would to heaven, that she had not been forbidden me!

60 I sent forth my handmaid, and said to her, "Go, ask tidings inquisitively of my beloved, and bring me intelligence."

61 She said, "I have seen the hostile guards negligent of their watch, and the wild heifer may be smitten by any archer, who desires to shoot her."

62 Then she turned towards me with the neck of a young roe, well-grown, of an exquisite breed among the gazals of the wood, a roe with a milk-white face.

63 I have been informed of a man ungrateful for my kindness; but ingratitude turns the mind of a benefactor from any more beneficence.

64 The instructions, which my valiant uncle gave me, I have diligently observed; at the time when the lips are drawn away from the bright teeth,

65 In the struggle of the fight, into whose deepest gulphs the warriors plunge themselves without complaint or murmur.

66 When my tribe have placed me as a shield between them and the hostile spears, I have not ignobly declined the danger, although the place, where I fixed my foot, was too narrow to admit a companion.

67 When I heard the din of MORRA raised in the field, and the sons of RABEIA in the thick dust,

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68 And the shouts of DHOHOL at the moment of assault, when they rush in troops to the conflict with all their sharp-bitting lions,

69 When even the mildest of the tribes saw the skirmish under their standards (and Death *spreads havoc* under the standard of the mildest nation),

70 Then I knew with certainty, that, in so fierce a contest with them, many a heavy blow would make the perched birds of the brain fly quickly from every skull :

71 As soon as I beheld the legions of our enemies advancing, and animating one another to battle, I too rushed forward, and acted without reproach.

72 The troops called out ANTARA ! while javelins, long as the cords of a well, were forcibly thrust against the chest of my dark steed.

73 I ceased not to charge the foe with the neck and breast of my horse, until he was mantled in blood.

74 My steed, bent aside with the stroke of the lances in his fore-head, complained to me with gushing tears and tender sobbing :

75 Had he known the art of discourse,

he would have addressed me in a plaintive strain; and, had he possessed the faculty of speech, he would have spoken to me distinctly.

76 In the midst of the black dust, the horses were impetuously rushing with disfigured countenances; every robust stallion and every strong-limbed short-haired mare.

77 Then my soul was healed, and all my anguish was dispersed, by the cry of the warriors, saying, "Well done, ANTARA; charge again!"

78 My camels too are obedient to my will, as often as I desire to kindle the ardour of my heart, and press it on to some arduous enterprise.

79 Yet I fear lest death should seize me, before the adverse turn of war has overtaken the two sons of DEMDEM;

80 Men, who attacked my reputation, when I had given them no offence, and vowed, when I had never assailed them, to shed my blood;

81 Yes! they injured me—but I have left their father, like a victim, to be mangled by the lions of the wood, and by the eagles advanced in years.

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THE

POEM OF AMRU.

THE ARGUMENT.

The discordant and inconsistent accounts of the commentators, who seem to have collected without examination every tradition that presented itself, have left us very much in the dark on the subject of the two following poems; but the common opinion, which appears to me the most probable, is, that they are, in fact, *political and adverse declamations*, which were delivered by AMRU and HARETH at the head of their respective clans, before AMRU the son of HINDA, king of HIRA in *Mesopotamia*, who had assumed the office of mediator between them after a most obstinate war, and had undertaken to hear a discussion of their several claims to pre-eminence, and to decide their cause with perfect impartiality. In some copies, indeed, as in those of NAHAS and of ZAUZENI, the two poems are separated; and in that of OBAIDALLA,

the poem of HARETH is totally omitted; a remarkable fact, of which I have made some use to a different purpose in the preliminary dissertation. Were I to draw my opinion solely from the structure and general turn of AMRU's composition, I should conceive that the king of HIRA who, like other tyrants, wished *to make all men just but himself, and to leave all nations free but his own*, had attempted to enslave the powerful tribe of TAGLEB, and to appoint a prefect over them, but that the warlike possessors of the deserts and forests had openly disclaimed his authority and employed their principal leader and poet to send him defiance, and magnify their own independent spirit.

SOME ARABIAN writers assert, what there is abundant reason to believe, that the above-mentioned king was killed by the author of the following poem, who composed it, say they, on that occasion; but the king himself is personally addressed by the poet, *and warned against precipitation in deciding the contest;* and, where mention is made of *crowned heads left prostrate on the field*, no particular monarch seems to be intended, but the conjunction

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copulative has the force, as it often has in *Arabic*, of a *frequentative* particle.

Let us then, where certainty connot be obtained, be satisfied with high probability, and suppose, with TABREIZI, that the two tribes of BECR and TAGLEB, having exhausted one another in a long war, to which the murder of COLEIB the *Taglebite* had given rise, agreed to terminate their ruinous quarrel, and to make the king of HIRA their umpire; that, on the day appointed, the tribes met before the palace or royal tent; and that AMRU, the son of CELTHUM, prince of the *Taglebites*, either pronounced his poem according to the custom of the *Arabs*, or stated his pretensions in a solemn speech, which he afterwards versified, that it might be more easily remembered by his tribe and their posterity.

The oration or poem, or whatever it may be called, is arrogant beyond all imagination, and contains hardly a colour of argument: the prince was, most probably, a vain young man, proud of his accomplishments, and elate with success in his wars; but his production could not fail of becoming extremely popular among his countrymen; and his own family, the

descendants of JOSHAM the son of BECR, were so infatuated by it, that (as one of their own poets admits) *they could scarce ever desist from repeating it, and thought they had attained the summit of glory without any farther exertions of virtue.* He begins with a strain perfectly *Anacreontic*, the elegiac style of the former poems not being well adapted to his eager exultation and triumph; yet there is some mixture of complaint on the departure of his mistress, whose beauties he delineates with a boldness and energy highly characteristic of unpolished manners: the rest of his work consists of menaces, vaunts, and exaggerated applause of his own tribe for their generosity and prowess, the goodness of their horses, the beauty of their women, the extent of their possessions, and even the number of their ships; which boasts were so well founded, that, according to some authors, if MAHOMED had not been born, the *Taglebites* would have appropriated the dominion of all *Arabia*, and possibly would have erected a mighty state, both civil and maritime.

This poem is composed in *copious* verse, or metre of the *fourth* species, according to the following form:

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"Amatores | puellarum | misellos
Ocellorum | nitor multos | fefellit."

But the compound foot *amore furens* is used at pleasure instead of the first epitrite ; as,

"Venusta puel | la, tarda venis | ad hortum,
Parata lyra est, | paratus odor | rosarum."

THE

POEM OF AMRU.

1 HOLLA !—Awake, sweet damsel, and bring our morning draught in thy capacious goblet ; nor suffer the rich wines of ENDEREIN to be longer hoarded :

2 Bring the well tempered wine, that seems to be tinctured with saffron ; and, when it is diluted with water, overflows the cup.

3 This is the liquor, which diverts the anxious lover from his passion; and, as soon as he tastes it, he is perfectly composed :

4 Hence thou seest the penurious churl, when the circling bowl passes him, grow regardless of his pelf:

5 When its potent flames have seized the discreetest of our youths, thou wouldst imagine him to be in a phrensy.

6 Thou turnest the goblet from us, O mother of AMRU ; for the true course of the goblet is to the right hand :

7 He is not the least amiable of thy

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three companions, O mother of AMRU, to whom thou hast not presented the morning bowl.

8 How many a cup have I purchased in BALBEC! how many more in DAMASCUS and KASIREIN!

9 Surely our allotted hour of fate will overtake us; since we are destined to death, and death to us.

10 O stay awhile, before we separate, thou lovely rider on camels; that we may relate to thee our sorrows, and thou to us thy delights!

11 O stay—that we may inquire, whether thou hast altered thy purpose of departing hastily, or whether thou hast wholly deceived thy too confident lover:

12 In the hateful day of battle, whilst he struggles amid wounds and blows, may the Ruler of the world refresh thy sight with coolness, and gratify it with every desired object!

13 O AMRU, when thou visitest thy fair one in secret, and when the eyes of lurking enemies are closed in rest,

14 She displays two lovely arms, fair and full as the limbs of a long-necked snow-white young camel, that frisks in the vernal season over the sand-banks and green hillocs;

15 And two sweet breasts, smooth and white as vessels of ivory, modestly defended from the hand of those, who presume to touch them :

16 She discovers her slender shape, tall and well-proportioned, and her sides gracefully rising with all their attendant charms ;

17 Her hips elegantly swelling, which the entrance of the tent is scarce large enough to admit and her waist, the beauty of which drives me to madness ;

18 With two charming columns of jasper or polished marble, on which hang rings and trinkets making a stridulous sound.

19 My youthful passion is rekindled, and my ardent desire revives, when I see the travelling camels of my fair one driven along in the evening ;

20 When the towns of YEMAMA appear in sight, exalted above the plains, and shining like bright sabres in the hands of those, who have unsheathed them.

21 *When she departs,* the grief of a she-camel, whoseeks her lost foal, and returns despairing with piercing cries, equals not my anguish ;

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22 Nor that of a widow, with snowy locks, whose mourning never ceases for her nine children, of whom nothing remains, but what the tomb has concealed.

23 *Such is our fate!* This day and the morrow, and the morning after them, are pledges in the hand of destiny for events, of which we have no knowledge.

24 O son of HINDA, be not precipitate in giving judgement against us: hear us with patience, and we will give thee certain information,

25 That we lead our standards to battle, *like camels to the pool*, of a white hue, and bring them back stained with blood, in which they have quenched their thirst;

26 That our days of prosperity, in which we have refused to obey the commands of kings, have been long and brilliant.

27 Many a chief of his nation, on whom the regal diadem has been placed, the refuse of those who implored his protection,

28 Have we left prostrate on the field, while his horses waited by his side, with one of their hoofs bent, and with bridles richly adorned.

29 Often have we fixed our mansions in DHU THALUH towards the districts of SYRIA, and have kept at a distance those who menaced us.

30 *We were so disguised in our armour, that* the dogs of the tribe snarled at us; yet we stripped the branches from every thorny tree (*every armed warrior*) that opposed us.

31 When we roll the millstone of war over a little clan, they are ground to flour in the first battle;

32 From the eastern side of NAJD the cloth of the mill is spread, and whatever we cast into it soon becomes impalpable powder.

33 You alight on our hills as guests are received in their station, and we hasten to give you a warm reception, lest you should complain of our backwardness:

34 We invite you to our board, and speedily prepare for your entertainment a solid rock, which, before day-break, shall reduce you to dust.

35 Surely hatred after hatred has been manifested by thee, *O hostile chief*, and thy secret rancour has been revealed:

36 But we have inherited glory, as the

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race of MAAD well knows; we have fought with valour till our fame has been illustrious:

37 When the falling pillars of our tents quiver over our furniture, we defend our neighbours from the impending ruin:

38 We disperse our gifts to our countrymen, but disdain to share their spoils; and the burdens, which we bear, we support for their advantage.

39 When the troops of the foe are at a distance from us, we dart our javelins; and, when we close in the combat, we strike with sharp sabres;

40 Our dark javelins exqusitely wrought of KHATHAIAN reeds, slender and delicate; our sabres, bright and piercing:

41 With these we cleave in pieces the heads of our enemies; we mow, we cut down their necks as with sickles:

42 Then might you imagine the skulls of heroes on the plain, to be the bales of a camel thrown on the rocky ground.

43 Instead of submitting to them, we crush their heads; and their terror is such, that they know not on which side the danger is to be feared.

44 Our cimeters, whose strokes are furiously interchanged, are as little regarded by us, as twisted sashes in the hands of playful children.

45 Their armour and ours, stained reciprocally with our blood, seems to be died or painted with the juice of the crimson syringa-flower.

46 At a time when the tribe is reluctant to charge the foe, apprehensive of some probable disaster,

47 Then we lead on our troop, like a mountain with a pointed summit; we preserve our reputation, and advance in the foremost ranks,

48 With youth, who consider death as the completion of glory, and with aged heroes experienced in war:

49 We challenge all the clans together to contend with us, and we boldly preclude their sons from approaching the mansion of our children.

50 On the day, when we are anxious to protect our families, we keep vigilant guard, clad in complete steel;

51 But on the day, when we have no

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such anxiety for them, our ligions assemble in full council,

52 Led by a chief among the descendants of JOSHAM the son of BECR, we bruise our adversaries, both the weak and the strong.

53 Oh! the nations remember not the time, when we bowed the neck, or ever flagged in the conflict.

54 Oh! let no people be infatuated and violent against us; for we will requite their infatuation, which surpasses the folly of the most foolish.

55 On what pretence, O AMRU, son of HINDA, should we be subject to the sovereign, whom thou wouldst place over us?

56 By what pretence, O AMRU, son of HINDA, dost thou yield to our calumniators, and treat us with indignity?

57 Thou hast menaced us: thou hast thought to intimidate us; but gently, O king! say, when were we ever the vassals of thy mother!

58 Our javelins, O AMRU, disdain to relax their vehemence before thee in assailing our foes:

59 Whenever a man uses force to bend

them, they start back, and become inflexibly rigid,

60 So rigid, that, when they return to their former state, they ring with a shrill noise, piercing the neck and forehead of him who touches them.

61 Hast thou ever been informed, that JOSHAM, the son of BECR, in battles anciently fought, was at any time remiss?

62 We have inherited the renown of ALKAMA, the son of SAIF, who by dint of valour obtained admission for us into the castles of glory.

63 We are heirs to MOHALHIL, and to ZOHEIR the flower of his tribe: O of how noble a treasure were they the preservers!

64 From ATTAB also and from CELTHUM we have received the inheritance transmitted from their progenitors.

65 By DHU'LBORRA, of whose fame thou hast heard the report, have we been protected; and through him we protect those who seek our aid.

66 Before him the adventurous COLEIB sprung from us: and what species of glory is there, which we have not attained?

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67 When our antagonists twist against us the cords *of battle*, either we burst the knot, or rend the necks of our opponents.

68 We shall be found the firmest of tribes in keeping our defensive alliance, and the most faithful in observing the bond of our treaties.

69 When the flames were kindled in the mountain, on the morning of an excursion, we gave succour more important that the aid of other allies.

70 To give immediate relief, we kept all our herds confined in DHUORATHEI, until our milch-camels of a noble breed were forced to graze on withered herbs.

71 We protect with generosity the man who submits to us, but chastise with firmness him, by whom we are insulted.

72 We reject the offers of those who have displeased us, but accept the presents of those with whom we are satisfied.

73 We succoured the right wing, when our troops engaged in combat, and our valiant brothers gave support to the left.

74 They made a fierce attack against the legions which opposed them, and we not less

fiercely assailed the squadrons by which we were opposed.

75 They returned with booty and with rich spoils, and the sons of kings were among our captives.

76 To you, O descendants of BECR, to you we address ourselves : have you not yet learned the truth concerning us ?

77 Have you not experienced, with what impetuosity our troops have attacked your troops, with what force they have darted their javelins ?

78 We are armed with bright sabres, and clad in habergeons made in YEMEN ; our cimeters are part strait, part bent.

79 We have coats of mail, that glitter like lightning ; the plaits of which are seen wrinkles above our belts :

80 When at any time our heroes put them off, you may see their skin blackened with the pressure of the steel.

81 The plaits of our hawberks resemble the surface of a pool, which the winds have ruffled in their course.

82 On the morning of attack, we are born into the field on short-haired steeds,

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which have been known to us from the time when we weaned them, and which we rescued from our foes, after they had been taken.

83 They rush to the fight, armed with breast-plates of steel; they leave it with their manes disheveled and dusty, and the reins, tied in knots, lie on their necks.

84 We inherited this excellent breed from our virtuous ancestors and, on our death, they will be inherited by our sons.

85 All the tribes of MAAD perfectly know, when they are tents are pitched in the well-watered valleys,

86 That we support the distressed in every barren year; and are bountiful to such as solicit our bounty;

87 That we defend the oppressed, when we think it just; and fix our abode in ARABIA, where we find it convenient;

88 That we give succour to those who are near us, when the bright cimeters make the eyes of our heroes wink.

89 We entertain strangers at our board whenever we are able; but we hurl destruction on those who approach us hostilely.

90 We are the tribe who drink water

from the clearst brooks ; whilst other clans are forced to drink it foul and muddy.

91 Go, ask the sons of TAMAH and of DOMIA, how they have found us in the conflict !

92 Behind us come our lovely, our charming, damsels, whom we guard so vigilantly, that they cannot be made captive, or even treated with disrespect ;

93 Fair maidens descended from JOSHAM, the son of BECR, who comprise evey species of beauty, both in the opinion of men and in truth :

94 They have exacted a promise from their husbands, that, when they engaged with the hostile legions, distinguished by marks of valour,

95 They would bring back, as spoils, coats of mail and cimeters, and captives led chained in pairs.

96 Thou mayst behold us sallying forth into the open plain, whilst every other tribe seeks auxiliaries through fear of our prowess.

97 When our damsels are on foot, they walk with graceful motions, and wave their bodies like those of libertines heated with wine.

98 They feed with their fair hands our

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coursers of noble birth, and say to us, "You are no husbands of ours, unless you protect us from the foe."

99 Yes; if we defend not them, we retain no possessions of value after their loss, nor do we think even life desirable:

100 But nothing can afford our sweet maids so sure a protection as the strokes of our sabres, which make mens' arms fly off like the clashing wands of playful boys.

101 We seem, when our drawn cimeters are displayed, to protect all mankind, as fathers protect their children.

102 Our heroes roll the heads of their enemies, as the strong well-made youths roll their balls in the smooth vale.

103 This world is ours, and all that appears on the face of it; and, when we do attack, we attack with irresistible force.

104 when a tyrant oppresses and insults a nation, we disdain to degrade ourselves by submitting to his will.

105 we have been called injurious, although we have injured no man; but, if they persist in calumniating us, we will show the vehemence of our anger.

106 As soon as a child of our tribe is weaned from his mother, the loftiest chiefs of other clans bend the knee, and pay his homage.

107 We force our enemies to taste the unmixed draught of death; and heavy is the overthrow of our adversaries in battle.

108 We fill the earth with our tents, until it becomes too narrow to contain them; and cover the surface of the ocean with our ships.

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THE

POEM OF HARETH.

THE ARGUMENT.

When AMRU had finished his extravagant panegyric on the tribe of TAGLEB, and had received the loud applause of his own party, HARETH arose; and pronounced the following poem, or speech in verse, which he delivered, according to some authors, without any meditation, but which, as others assert with greater appearance of probability, he had prepared and gotten by heart.

Although, if we believe ASMAI, the poet was considerably above a hundred years old at this time, yet he is said to have poured forth his couplets with such boiling ardour, that, without perceiving it, *he cut his hand with the string of his bow, on which*, after the manner of the *Arabian* orators, *he leaned, while he was speaking.*

Whatever was his age, the wisdom and art of his composition are finely contrasted with the youthful imprudence of his adversary, who must have exasperated the king, instead of conciliating his good will, and seems even to have menaced the very man, from whom he was asking a favourable judgment. HARETH, on the contrary, begins with complimenting the queen, whose name was ASOMA, and who heard him behind the tapistry: he appears also to have introduced another of his favourites, HINDA, merely because that was the name of the king's mother; and he celebrates the monarch himself as a model of justice, valour, and magnanimity. The description of his camel, which he interweaves according to custom, is very short; and, he opens the defence of his tribe with coolness and moderation; but as he proceeds, his indignation seems to be kindled, and the rest of his harangue consists of sharp expostulations, and bitter sarcasms, not without much sound reasoning, and a number of allusions to facts, which cannot but be imperfectly known to us though they must have been fresh in the memory of his hearers. The general scope of his argument is, that no

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blame was justly imputable to the sons of BECR for the many calamities, which the TAGLEBITES had endured, and which had been principally occasioned by their own supineness and indiscretion. This oration, or poem, or whatever it may be denominated, had its full effect on the mind of the royal umpire, who decided the cause in favour of the BECRITES, and lost his life for a decision apparently just. He must have remarked the fiery spirit of the poet AMRU from the style of his eloquence, as CESAR first discovered the impetuous vehemence of BRUTUS's temper from his speech, delivered at *Nice*, in favour of king *Deiotarus* ; but neither the *Arabian*, nor the *Roman*, tyrant were sufficiently on their guard against men, whom they had irritated even to fury.

This poem is composed in *light* verse, or metre of the *eleventh* class, consisting of epitrites, ionic feet, and pæons, variously intermixed, as in this form :

"Amarylli, | dulci lyrâ | modulare
Molle carmen | sub arbore | fusa sacrâ."

Sometimes a molossus ends the distich, as,

"Dulce carmen | sub arbore | fusa sacrâ
Modulare, | dum sylvulæ | respondent."

The close of a couplet in this measure has often the cadence of a *Latin* or *Greek* hexameter: thus, v. 20.

Tis-háli kháilin khilála dháca rogáo.

That is, literally,

Hinnitûs modulantur equi, fremitûsque cameli.

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THE

POEM OF HARETH.

1 Doth fair Asoma give us notice of her departure? Oh, why are sojourners so frequently weary of their sojourning!

2 *She is resolved to depart* after our mutual vows among the sandy hillocs of Shamma, and in the nearer station of Khalsa;

3 *Vows repeated in* Mohayat, Sifah and Aglai in Dhufitak, Adhib and Wafa,

4 *Vows, renewed* in the bowers of Katha and the dales of Shoreib, in the Two Valleys, and in the plains of Ayla.

5 I see no remains of the troth which she plighted in those stations; and I waste the day in tears, frantic with grief; but oh! what part of my happiness will tears restore?

6 Yet, O Hareth, *a new passion invites thee;* for Hinda is before thy eyes, and the fire, which she kindles at night in the hills, will direct thee to her abode:

7 She kindles it with abundance of wood between the hilly stations of AKEIK and SHAKHSEIN, and it blazes like the splendour of the sun.

8 I have been contemplating her fire from a distance on the hill, whence our excursions are made ; but oh ! the scorching heat, and the calamities of war, prevent me from approaching her.

9 But I seek assistance in dispelling my care, when the sojourner of the tent hastily leaves his abode *through fear of some impending calamity*,

10 On a camel swift as an ostrich, the mother of many young ones, the long-necked inhabitant of the desert,

11 Who hears a soft sound, and dreads the approach of the hunter, in the afternoon just before the dusk of evening :

12 Then mayest thou see behind her, from the quick motion of her legs, and the force with which she strikes the earth, a cloud of dust thin as the gossamer ;

13 And the traces of her hoofs, which are such as to be soon effaced by the winds blowing over the sandy plain.

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14 With her I disport myself in the sultry noon, whilst every son of valour is like a blind camel devoted to death.

15 Yet misfortunes and evil tidings have brought on us affairs, which give us affliction and anguish;

16 For our brethern, the family of ARAKEM, *the aragon-eyed*, have transgressed the bounds of justice against us, and have been vehement in their invectives:

17 They have confounded the blameless among us which the guilty, and the most perfect innocence has not escaped their censure.

18 They have insisted, that all, who pitch their tents in the desert, are our associates, and that we are involved in their offences.

19 They assembled their forces at night, and, as soon as the dawn appeared, there was nothing heard among them but a tumultuous noise

20 Of those who called, and those who answered; the neighing of horses, and, among the rest, the lowing of camels.

21 O thou, who adornest thy flowery speeches concerning us before AMRU, can this falsehood be long undetected?

22 Imagine not that thy instigation will animate him against us, or humiliate us; since long before thee our enemies have openly calumniated us,

23 Yet we continued advancing ourselves in defiance of their hate, with laudable self-sufficiency and exalted reputation.

24 Before this day, the eyes of nations have been dazzled by our glory, and have been moved with envious indignation and obstinate resentment.

25 Fortune seemed to raise for us a dark rock, with a pointed summit, dispelling the clouds,

26 Thick and firm, secured from calamity, not to be weakened by any disaster however grievous and violent.

27 Intrust to our wisdom every momentous affair, from which you desire to be extricated, and by which the assemblies of chiefs are made unhappy.

28 If you inquire concerning our wars between MILAHA and DHAKIB, you will find on their plains many an unavenged, and many an avenged, corse:

29 Or, if you examine diligently the

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questions, in which all tribes are deeply interested, you will see the difference between your offences and our innocence :

30 But if you decline *this fair discussion*, we shall turn from you with resentment, concealing hatred in our bosoms as the mote is concealed in the closed eye-lids.

31 Reject, if you please, the terms which we offer ; but of whom have you heard, that surpasses us in glory ?

32 you have perfectly known us on the days, when the warriors have assailed one another with rapacious violence, when every tribe has raised a tumultuous din ;

33 When we brought up our camels from the palm-groves of BAHREIN, and drove them by rapid marches, till we reached the plain of HISA.

34 Then we advanced against the sons of TAMEIM, and, when the sacred month required a cessation of our war, we carried away the daughters of their tribe for our handmaids.

35 *In opposition to us*, neither could the valiant man keep his ground on the level field, nor did precipitate flight avail the faint-hearted.

36 No ; the coward, who ran hastily from

the plain, was not saved by the summit of rocks or the roughness of craggy paths.

37 By these exertions we maintained our pre-eminence over the tribes, until MONDIR, son of the beautiful MAISEMA, obtained the dominion :

38 He was a prince, who bore witness to our valour on the day of HAYARAIN, when the calamity of war was, in truth, a calamity :

39 A prince who subjected nations ; whose equal in magnanimity could not be found among them.

40 Desist then from vaunting and from hostility : you have, indeed, pretended ignorance of our claims, but from that pretended ignorance will proceed your wo.

41 Remember well the oaths taken in DHU'LMEJAAZ, the covenants and vows of amity, which were made there of old.

42 Beware of injustice and violence ; nor let your intemperate passions impel you to violate your contracts written on tablets.

43 know, that we and you, on the day when we made our treaty, were equally bound by our respective engagements :

44 Are we responsible for the crimes of

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CANDA ? Shall their conquering chief have the spoils, and shall reprisals be made upon us?

45 Are we responsible for the excesses of HANEIFA, and for all the conflicts, which the dusty plain has seen accumulated ?

46 Must we answer for the offences of the sons of ATEIK ? No : whoever has broken his covenant, we are innocent of their war.

47 Doth the guilt of IBAAD hang on our heads, as the burden is suspended on the centre of the camel's girths ?

48 Has the blame due to KODHAA fallen upon us ? or, rather, are we not secure from a single drop of their faults ?

49 Are we responsible for the crimes of IYAAD, as it was said to the tribe of THASM, "Your brethren are rebels ?"

50 Those, who raised the dissension, belong not to us, neither KAIS, nor JONDAL, nor HADDA.

51 Vain pretexts ! Unjust aspersions ! *That we should suffer for others*, as the roe is sacrificed in the place of the sheep !

52 Fourscore warriors, indeed, advanced from TAMEIN, and their hands carried lances, whose points were Fate ;

53 Yet, they profaned not the hallowed

places of the sons of RIZAAH on the hills of NITTA, when they called on them for mercy :

54 They left them, however, wounded on the plain, and returned with captive herds and flocks so numerous, that the drivers of them were deafened with their cries.

55 The vanquished tribe came afterwards to implore restitution, but not a single beast, either black or of a bright hue, was restored to them :

56 So they retired with heart-breaking affliction, nor could any stream of water quench their ardent rage :

57 After this, a troop of horsemen, led by the impetuous GHALLAAK, assailed them without remorse or pity:

58 Full many a son of TAGLEB has been smitten, whose blood has flowed unrevenged, while the black dust covered his corse.

59 Are your cares comparable to those of our tribe, when MONDIR waged war against them ? Are we, *like you*, become subject to the son of HINDA ?

60 When he fixed his abode in the lofty turrets of MAISUNA, and sojourned in the nearer station of KHALTHA,

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61 From every tribe there flocked around him a company of robbers, impetuous as eagles:

62 He led them on, and supplied them with dates and with water: so the will of GOD was accomplished, and afflicted men doomed to affliction.

63 Then you invited them to attack you by your want of circumspection, and the vain security of your intemperate joy impelled them to be hostile.

64 They surprised you not, indeed, by a sudden assault; but *they advanced, and* the sultry vapour of noon, *through which you saw them*, increased their magnitude.

65 O thou inveterate and glozing calumniator, who inveighest against us before king AMRU, will there be no end of thy unjust invectives?

66 Between AMRU and us many acts of amity have passed, and from all of them, no doubt, has benefit arisen.

67 He is a just prince, and the most accomplished that walks the earth: all praise is below his merit:

68 A prince descended from IREM! A warrior, like him, ought ever to be encircled

with troops of genii, for he protects his domain, and refuses to punish even his opponents:

69 A monarch, who knows us by three infallible signs, by each of which our excellence is decided:

70 *The first is* the conspicuous token of our valour, when all ARABIA come forth in the rocky vales, each tribe of MAAD under their banner,

71 And assembled, in complete armour, round the warlike KAIS, that valiant prince of YEMEN, who stood *firm and brilliant* like a white cliff.

72 Then came a ligion of high-born youths, whom nothing could restrain but our long and glittering spears;

73 But we repelled them with strokes, *which made their blood gush from their sides*, as the water streams from the mouth of a bottle which contains it.

74 We drove them for refuge to the craggy hills of THAHLAAN; we thrust them before us, till the muscles of their thighs were breeched in gore.

75 We did with them a deed, the name of which GOD only knows; and no revenge

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could be taken for the blood of men who sought their own fate.

76 Next advanced HOJAR, son of OMMI KATHAAM, with an army of PERSIANS, clad in discoloured brass,

77 A lion in the conflict, of a ruddy hue, trampling on his prey; but a vernal season of beneficence in every barren year:

78 Yet we smote them on the foreheads with the edges of our cimeters, which quivered in their flesh like buckets drawn from a deep well encircled with stone.

79 *Secondly*, we broke the chains of AMRI-OLKAIS, after his long imprisonment and anguish.

80 We forcibly revenged the death of MONDIR on the king of GASSAAN, that his blood might not flow in vain.

81 We redeemed our captives with nine kings of illustrious race, whose spoils were exceedingly precious.

82 With the horses, with the dark horses, of the sons of AUS came whole squadrons, fierce as eagles with crooked beaks:

83 We scarce had passed through the cloud of dust, when they turned their backs;

and then how dreadfully blazed the fire of our vengeance !

84 *Lastly*, we gave birth to AMRU the son of OMM AYAAS, for not long ago were the bridal gifts presented to us *as kinsmen :*

85 May our faithful admonitions reach all our kindred tribes, extended as wide as our consanguinity, in plains beyond plains !

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